

SECRET

NSC

13 MAY 75

(EVENING) 2230

MAY 13/1975

DCI's

COPY

(not given  
AS SEEN)

DCI BRIEFING FOR  
13 MAY NSC MEETING

THE MAYAGUEZ INCIDENT

I. The Mayaguez remains anchored ~~about 100 yards~~  
off Koh Tang island.

A. A transfer of personnel from the ship to  
the island occurred between 0600 and 0700  
EDT today, and it seems likely that ~~all~~  
most of the crew have now been moved to  
the island.

II.

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the Khmer Communists are also holding a num-  
ber of Vietnamese refugees and may be keeping them  
on Koh Tang or some other offshore island.

III. The Khmer Communists appear to have augmented  
their naval force in the vicinity of the Mayaguez  
since the ship's seizure.

A. This afternoon a total ~~of~~ <sup>small</sup> five patrol craft (Swift?)  
were observed near the ship and island. ~~W~~

1. Small caliber ground fire from both the  
boats and the island has been continu-  
ing against US aircraft in the area.

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at least occurs  
to keep under attack

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IV. The Communists have the capability to further reinforce.

- A. They probably captured intact most of the military equipment under GKR control prior to the fall of Phnom Penh.
- B. In naval strength, the GKR had between 22 and 25 armed patrol craft operating out of <sup>REAN</sup>~~REAN~~ Naval Base in Kampot Province. Of these, 17 to 19 were coastal patrol boats, 4 to 5 were riverine patrol boats, and one was a submarine chaser.
1. Current aerial reconnaissance indicates that the Khmer Communists have at least 13 of these patrol craft in their possession.
  2. The KC probably have enough qualified personnel to operate them.
  3. We believe<sup>15</sup> that the KC will be unable to <sup>move</sup>~~divert~~ other craft from the naval base near Phnom Penh <sup>down the Mekong around</sup> to the Gulf of Thailand in the next few days.

- C. As for air strength, preliminary analysis of 12 May photography showed three T-28 fighters and a total of six C-47 and C-131 <sup>transports</sup>

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aircraft at Kompong Som airfield. There is also a substantial <sup>remaining</sup> number of T-28 aircraft <sup>left</sup> at Pochentong Airfield near Phnom Penh <sup>when it fell.</sup>

1. The KC have no qualified pilots, but there is some chance that <sup>some</sup> ~~few~~ former KAF pilots <sup>would fly in</sup> ~~could be used to~~ support of naval operations in the Gulf of Thailand.

2. Even if former KAF pilots were employed, their effectiveness would be minimal in the face of <sup>US</sup> hostile aircraft.

D. In ground Strength, KC combat forces at Kompong Som total some 2,000 troops, ~~including elements of the KC 3rd Division and local force units.~~ This force could be quickly augmented ~~however~~ by the remaining 14, 000 troops scattered throughout southwestern Cambodia. Any ~~such movements~~ probably would be undetected and some may have taken place already.

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1. At last count there were at least eight 105-mm howitzers at Ream, and more could be sent from other areas.
2. To transport troops by sea, the KE have at least three military craft <sup>(2 LSC, 1 LTC)</sup> at Ream and Kompong Som, with a minimum capability to move 1,600 troops at once.
3. The May 12 photography also shows ~~five~~ five freighters, eleven barges, two tugboats, and several dozen logistics craft in the Kompong Som - Ream area.

~~1. The Mayaguez remains anchored about 300 yards off Koh Tang island.~~  
~~A transfer of personnel from the ship to the island occurred between 0600 and 0700 EDT today and it seems likely that all or most of the crew have now been moved to the island.~~

Ref:

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~~the Khmer Communists are also holding a number of Vietnamese refugees and may be keeping them on Koh Tang or some other offshore island.~~

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- V. In the first public Chinese response to the incident, vice-premier Teng Hsiao-ping told newsmen in Paris that "there is nothing China could do" should the US elect to use force to free the ship and crew. Teng denied any knowledge of a possible Chinese mediatory role.
- A. Meanwhile East German commentary has portrayed the incident as evidence of a new US "provocation" against Cambodia.

*Thai*

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FBIS 05'''''' (OUT OF SEQUENCE)

KHUKRIT'S 'NO' TO U.S. WAR ACTION FROM THAI SOIL

BK142352 BANGKOK THE NATION IN ENGLISH 14 MAY 75 P. 1 BK

(EXCERPTS) THAILAND AND THE UNITED STATES YESTERDAY APPEARED TO BE HEADING TOWARD A NEW DIPLOMATIC COLLISION OVER U.S. PLANS TO SEND 1,000 MARINES TO THAILAND FOLLOWING THE CAMBODIAN SEIZURE OF AN AMERICAN MERCHANT SHIP IN INTERNATIONAL WATERS.

PRIME MINISTER N.R. KHUKRIT PRAMOT SAID LAST NIGHT THE GOVERNMENT WILL NOT ALLOW THE MARINES TO ENTER THE COUNTRY.

HE ADDED THAT MEASURES HAVE ALREADY BEEN LAID DOWN TO PREVENT THE U.S. FROM SENDING THE MARINES HERE. HE DID NOT DISCLOSE DETAILS OF THE MEASURES.

THE MARINES, NOW BASED IN OKINAWA, WERE ORDERED TO "PREPARE TO DEPART SOON" FOR U-TAPAO AIR BASE.

EARLIER YESTERDAY PRIME MINISTER KHUKRIT SAID THAILAND WOULD NOT ALLOW THE U.S. TO WAGE A WAR WITH CAMBODIA FROM THAI SOIL.

PRIME MINISTER KHUKRIT PRAMOT YESTERDAY AFTERNOON SUMMONED THE U.S. EMBASSY MINISTER, EDWARD E. MASTERS, TO GOVERNMENT HOUSE AND INFORMED HIM OF THE THAI STAND.

N.R. KHUKRIT, WHO WAS ACTING IN THE CAPACITY OF THE FOREIGN MINISTER, WARNED THE U.S. MINISTER AGAINST DRAGGING THAILAND INTO THE DISPUTE.

THE PREMIER WAS YESTERDAY APPOINTED ACTING-FOREIGN MINISTER AND WILL HOLD THE POSITION UNTIL FOREIGN MINISTER CHATCHAI CHUNHAWAN RETURNS FROM THE ASEAN MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE IN KUALA LUMPUR.

14 MAY 0046Z RRM/GS''''''

KOH TANG

Based on December 1973 observations by an American who was on Koh Tang.

--There were two navigational stations on the nother/north-western part of the island. Each had an antenna of about 150 feet and a small hut housing a generator.

--There were about eight areas on the north/northwestern section of the island where helicopters could land; these were near the navigational stations.

--The only feasible landing area was about half-way down on the eastern side of the island. Even here, however, a 128 foot boat with a 12-15 draft could only get within 400-500 meters of the shore.

--The island was covered wth shrub and scrub brush, about 20-30 feet in height.

--There were no inhabitants on the island, no roads (only foot trails), no structures except for the navigational stations, and no airstrip.

--Water depths around the island--at about five kilometers off-shore--were 34-41 fathoms on the west, and 22-33 fathoms on the east.

--The prospects for oil in the area of the island is very good. There are also tin and manganese on the island.



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NSC

13 MAY 75

(morning)

13 May 1975

(1030)

DCI BRIEFING FOR  
13 MAY NSC MEETING

THE MAYAGUEZ INCIDENT

- I. The Mayaguez is at anchor just off Koh Tang Island, about 30 miles southwest of Kompong Som.
  - A. Until late yesterday evening, the ship was being held near where it was seized in the vicinity of Poulo Wai Island, about 40 miles further to the southwest.
    1. Shortly after midnight, however, an American reconnaissance aircraft observed the ship at Koh Tang Island.
    2. At least two US reconnaissance aircraft have reported receiving small arms fire from a gunboat, and from the Mayaguez itself.

B.



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1. The latest US reconnaissance flight observed the crew being transferred from the ship into a tugboat.

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2. Although the men could be moved to the mainland at any time, the Khmer Communists may intend to keep them on the island until some final decisions are made regarding the crew and vessel.

3. So far, the Khmer Communist government has not made a public statement regarding the Mayaguez, and Prince Sihanouk today in Peking denied any knowledge of the incident.

II. In the event of a US military effort, the Cambodian Communists would have limited means of reacting.

A. They would attempt to resist a recapture of the ship, an attack on the accompanying patrol craft, or a landing on Koh Tang. They presumably have few troops or weapons to meet any such effort, however.

B. The Cambodian Communists have no capability to thwart a mining effort against Kompong Som, and the harbor defenses are not impressive. The port and military camp are exposed and separate from the town.

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C. In either case, the Communists might decide to kill or threaten to kill the crew of the Mayaguez.

1. They are hard-liners, and their actions indicate that they are prepared to take extreme measures.
2. They have shown little disposition to back down on other matters or to give weight to international opinion in shaping their policies.

III. The first third country reactions to the incident are now coming in. The Communist countries in general are not likely to make a major effort to persuade the Cambodians to give up the ship, but China at least provides a channel of communications.

- A. On the other hand, the Communist states also will not actively support the Cambodians, except with propaganda.
- B. A TASS dispatch today noted the movement of a US naval task force to the Gulf of Thailand, and added that the Mayaguez "according to some reports was engaged in intelligence activities."

IV. Thai Prime Minister Khukrit has made a strong de-

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marche to the US charge in Bangkok that any US retaliation against Cambodia should not in any way involve Thailand.

V. The other countries in the area will be particularly attentive to the outcome of this incident.

A. If the Cambodians are successful in their effort, it will be perceived as another indication of US weakness and lack of resolve, particularly so since US citizens and the principle of international rights of passage are directly threatened.

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The former Cambodian government claimed twelve miles of territorial waters along the mainland coast and around offshore Cambodian islands. The Mayaguez was seized about eight miles from one of these islands. Phnom Penh's claim to the entire continental shelf in this area of the Gulf of Thailand related only to resource exploitation. It in no way restricted the free passage of shipping outside the twelve mile limit.

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## Poulo Wai Island

There are two small islands -- an East and a West Poulo Wai. (Some sources consider only the east island as Poulo Wai, and regard the west island as unnamed.)

- Terrain on both islands is basically flat, with a few small hills and no mountains.
- Some vegetation but no heavy jungle.
- Airstrip is located on the east island. Runway estimated at maximum length of 3,000 feet. A Cambodian naval commander (now a refugee in the Philippines) who left the island on April 19 states that airstrip was operable as of that date.
- Island's defenses: Until Khmer Communists took over, the Cambodian Navy normally stationed 60 men on the island, and has two 75 mm gun emplacements there, one on northern tip of the eastern island, and one on southeastern tip of eastern island. There were also several 12.7 machine guns, M50 machine guns, and an unknown number of mortars on the island. The west island apparently had no defenses, and there was nothing on it except a few natives and an inoperative lighthouse.
- Whether the Khmer Communists have done anything to maintain or strengthen the defenses on the eastern island is unknown.
- Some Americans and French were on island as of April 19: the Cambodian naval commander who left the island on April 19 alleges that when he departed there were still "some Americans and French who work for Elf Oil Company left on the island." These individuals reportedly worked an oil rig about 20 miles to the south of the island where exploratory drilling was underway. We have no information on the present location of these Americans and Frenchmen.

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THE DIRECTOR OF  
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

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25X1 National Intelligence Officers

5 April 1976

TO: [ ] Office of the Legislative Council

25X1 FROM: [ ] NIO/SSEAAF

SUBJECT: GAO Report on the Mayaguez Incident

I have read the attached report, and do not feel it would be productive to comment on it in detail. My recommendation is that we return the report to the GAO, indicating that we prefer to make no comment on it. We should specify that our lack of comment should not be interpreted as meaning that we endorse the report.

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~~SECRET~~

THE DIRECTOR OF  
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

National Intelligence Officers

5 April 1976

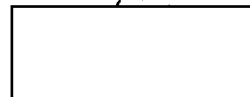
TO: [ ] C/ [ ] 25X1

FROM: [ ] NIO/SSEAAF 25X1

SUBJECT: GAO Report on the Mayaguez Incident

Dick: 25X1

Herewith the GAO report on the Mayaguez, and a brief note from me to [ ] Any comment that you care to make in addition is fine with me. 25X1



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